

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1               1. A method of ameliorating the symptoms of postpartum psychosis in a  
2 patient in need thereof, comprising administering an amount of a glucocorticoid receptor  
3 antagonist effective to ameliorate the symptoms of the postpartum psychosis, with the  
4 proviso that the first psychotic symptoms arise within nine months of childbirth, that the  
5 patient has never suffered any psychotic condition not triggered by childbirth, and that the  
6 patient did not suffer from psychosis prior to parturition.

1               2. The method of claim 1, wherein the first psychotic symptoms arise  
2 within eight weeks of childbirth.

1               3. The method of claim 1, wherein the glucocorticoid receptor antagonist  
2 comprises a steroid skeleton with at least one phenyl-containing moiety in the 11- $\beta$  position  
3 of the steroid skeleton.

1               4. The method of claim 3, wherein the phenyl-containing moiety in the  
2 11- $\beta$  position of the steroid skeleton is a dimethylaminophenyl moiety.

1               5. The method of claim 4, wherein the glucocorticoid receptor antagonist  
2 comprises mifepristone.

1               6. The method of claim 4, wherein the glucocorticoid receptor antagonist  
2 is selected from the group consisting of 11 $\beta$ -(4-dimethylaminoethoxyphenyl)-17 $\alpha$ -propynyl-  
3 17 $\beta$ -hydroxy-4,9-estradien-3-one and 17 $\beta$ -hydroxy-17 $\alpha$ -19-(4-methylphenyl)androsta-  
4 4,9(11)-dien-3-one.

1               7. The method of claim 1 wherein the glucocorticoid receptor antagonist  
2 is selected from the group consisting 4 $\alpha$ (S)-Benzyl-2(R)-prop-1-ynyl-  
3 1,2,3,4,4 $\alpha$ ,9,10,10 $\alpha$ (R)-octahydro-phenanthrene-2,7-diol and 4 $\alpha$ (S)-Benzyl-2(R)-  
4 chloroethynyl-1,2,3,4,4 $\alpha$ ,9,10,10 $\alpha$ (R)-octahydro-phenanthrene-2,7-diol.

1               8. The method of claim 1, wherein the glucocorticoid receptor antagonist  
2 is (11 $\beta$ ,17 $\beta$ )-11-(1,3-benzodioxol-5-yl)-17-hydroxy-17-(1-propynyl)estra-4,9-dien-3-one.

1               9. The method of claim 1, wherein the administration is once per day.

- 1           10.     The method of claim 1, wherein the mode of administration is oral.
- 1           11.     The method of claim 1, wherein the mode of administration is by a  
2     transdermal application, by a nebulized suspension, or by an aerosol spray.
- 1           12.     A kit for treating postpartum psychosis in a human, the kit comprising:  
2                         (i) a specific glucocorticoid receptor antagonist; and,  
3                         (ii) an instructional material teaching the indications, dosage  
4     and schedule of administration of the glucocorticoid receptor antagonist to a  
5     patient with postpartum psychosis.
- 1           13.     The kit of claim 12, wherein the glucocorticoid receptor antagonist is  
2     mifepristone.
- 1           14.     The kit of claim 12, wherein the mifepristone is in tablet form.